The Brent Elementary Diversity Working Group met on 5/15/19 in the Brent library. Brent Elementary is located at 301 North Carolina Ave. SE, Washington DC. The meeting began at 6:30pm.

Meeting Participants: Lindsay Bernard, Piper Campbell, Melinda Copeland, Danielle Drissel, Sara Ewbank, Julie Gutin, Dayon Hairston, Candace Hines, Lucy Hynes, Machee Kelly, Jasmine Leary, Sharon Santos, Bettina Schewe, and Adi Segal.

1) **Rising Tides Update:** Ms. Ewbank provided an update on the contracting process. DCPS has reviewed RFP (which has three components). It could be awarded to one vendor for all three parts, or multiple vendors. Three organizations have expressed interest. It’s now an administrative responsibility (personnel) to manage the award. DWG will be updated at beginning of next school year. Discussion of whether Rising Tides should receive a new name to better frame its emerging role as an affinity group.

   **Recommendations:** Consider changing the name to Rising Together. Agreement to explore which entities should be part of this discussion/a formal decision.

2) **Summer Brain Gain:** Ms. Schewe is working with SE Library on efforts to enroll Brent students in the DC Public Library summer reading program. DWG will leverage the Brent Book Buddies program to distribute a supply of gently used books that EVERYBODY WINS planned to throw away. First grade and kindergarten students will provide thank you books to their (older) buddies and encourage summer reading. Books will also be given to kindergarteners. In addition, DWG will compile the monthly spotlight books to create a summer recommended reading list. This list will be distributed during the May 28 Parent Teacher meeting day and included in the year end packets for families.

3) **Brent Buddies:** Pairing have not yet been announced. Goal is to have buddies for every incoming family. At this moment, we have more incoming families than we do volunteers. PTA community family liaisons will talk about the program during upcoming meetings and work to identify more volunteer family. DWG’s role in Brent Buddies going forward is to ensure support for incoming families beyond the kindergarten intake.

4) **Supporting Brent Families:** As we move forward DWG may be able to play a greater role in ensuring access and inclusion for specific family groups (e.g., military families). DWG may also look at the financial accessibility of school activities and advocacy to prevent inability to pay from inhibiting participation. DWG can help the community think about building “infrastructure” around identifying need and providing support. DWG can also help with messaging. For example, if the Welcome Picnic will not be free of charge for 2019/2020 school year, can DWG impact how the fees/costs are communicated to incoming families?
5) **Upcoming Events:** In connection with Asian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month (May) we will participate in Family Tai Chi on June 1 at Chinatown Park. Several activities are on the horizon for Pride (June). This Day in June was selected as a school wide reading and letters sent to families. Pride Parade poster party will be 6/3 at 3:30pm in Mr. Berg’s room. Posters will be displayed at Brent. Flyers are being posted to encourage participation in the Brent group for the Pride Parade which is 6/8 at 4pm. Year end will have a board displaying photos of the diverse Brent community in action with the message "We are Brent."

6) **Election of Board for 2019-20:** DWG extended its thanks to this year’s wonderful (!) board. DWG elected the following to fulfill the roles in 2019/2020: Chair, Danielle Drissel; Secretary Piper Campbell; Rising Tides Parent Liaison Adi Segal; and Rising Tides Academic Liaison Melinda Copeland.

7) **DWG Calendar for 2019-20 School Year.** Reflection on DWG events in 2018-19 in advance of a meeting among DWG, PTA and school administration about the school calendar for 2019-20. Full year included a display or two almost every month. Major DWG events to be calendared are Inclusive Schools Week, CommUnity Dance, Black History Living Wax Museum, and International Night.

   **Recommendations:** Spread out events clustered in January/February. Some discussion of having Multicultural Night in May (maybe on Friday at end of PARCC?) International Night should be re-labeled as Multicultural Night. Consider a shared calendar to ensure coordinated use of bulletin boards.

8) **Opportunities and Ideas for DWG 2019-20:** Enable DWG email account. Develop a DWG contribution for the auction. Encourage the school to establish a “calendar” for the board space and ensure DWG interests are included. Establish an earlier meeting time (i.e., 6:00 – 7:30). Consider more meetings with advanced notice of discussions or readings, perhaps quarterly (four times in the year, essentially once every third meeting. Consider outreach/partnership with other diversity-oriented groups; the advocacy group PAVE was mentioned as an example.

Next meeting date: TBD in September 2019

The meeting concluded at 8:00 pm